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BAPTISTS

Georgia pastor is new SBC president

INDIANAPOLIS (BP and local reports) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) messengers meeting in Indianapolis June 10-11 elected a new president, launched a bold initiative to share the Gospel with every person in North America by 2020, accepted a detailed report from the Executive Committee on the subject of child sexual abuse prevention, and adopted a much-discussed resolution on regenerate church membership.

Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Church in Woodstock, Ga., was elected president on the first ballot at the annual meeting by receiving 52.94% of the vote in a crowded field of six candidates.

Many of the approximately 7,200 registered messengers no doubt expected to witness the convention's first presidential runoff since 1982, but Hunt avoided that to become what is believed to be the denomination's first Native American president. Hunt is a Lumbee Indian, a North Carolina-based tribe.

Hunt is known for his passion for evangelism, discipleship, and missions, and those themes dominated his post-election press conference and a brief address to messengers.

His election came on the heels of LifeWay's Annual Church Profile report showing that Southern Baptists in 2007 baptized the fewest number of people in two decades. "I pray that these next two years will be exciting times as we turn the tide and begin once again to grow and to reach our neighbors and our nations for His glory and for the expansion of His glorious Kingdom," Hunt told messengers the day after his election.

One of Hunt's goals is to get younger pastors more involved in the denomination. His Timothy Barnabas ministry, founded in 1994, has as its focus mentoring, encouraging and challenging pastors, particularly younger ones.

Hunt said he hopes to be "able to inspire the younger generation that's coming behind me to buy in and then step up to the plate and support [the SBC]."

Hunt also said he wants to boost Cooperative Program giving by showing Southern Baptists, "especially the generation behind us, all that the Cooperative Program is doing."

"[We should] spend more time showing what's happening overseas, showing who's being helped, showing who's being cared for," he said. "[People then will say], 'I want to give more to that source.'"

Hunt's election came one day before messengers passed a resolution encouraging "all entities" to "strive toward a balanced representation of our ethnic diversity" and for the



CONCERT OF PRAISE — Lamon Gray, minister of music and worship at First Church, Jackson, and convention music director for the 2008 Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis, Ind., June 10 - 11, leads the choir and orchestra from First Church, Jackson, during one of the sessions at the convention. (Photo by Tony Martin)

president and various committees to work with state conventions and local associations to "identify ethnic leadership" who can serve on boards and committees.

Meanwhile, the North American Mission Board (NAMB) unveiled an ambitious National Evangelism Initiative named God's Plan for Sharing (GPS), with the goal of having "every believer sharing" the Gospel and "every person hearing" by 2020.

A television, radio, and print media campaign will accompany the initiative and, NAMB officials say, it can be contextualized for both urban and rural settings. It is being launched in four languages: English, Spanish, Korean, and Chinese.

The initiative was developed by NAMB in conjunction with state and local Southern Baptist leaders with the encouragement of former SBC President Frank Page. Additional information is available at www.nei2020.org.

The GPS initiative consists of four areas of focus: praying, engaging, sowing and harvesting. "Just imagine if every believer in North America started sharing the Gospel and every person heard that Gospel by the year 2020," NAMB President Geoff Hammond said.

Page is confident Southern Baptists will respond positively to the initiative. "As I have been around the country and around the world, the laypeople I have talked with are ready to get out and do something for

Christ," he said, "and I think given the proper motivation and direction, they'll do it."

SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman delivered a report to messengers on child sexual abuse prevention to coincide with a four-page EC report in the SBC Bulletin on the subject.

Chapman told messengers that "sexual abuse is a growing crisis in this nation" and that "one sexual predator in our midst is one too many." Sexual predators, he said, "must be on notice that Southern Baptist churches are not a harvest field for their devious deeds."

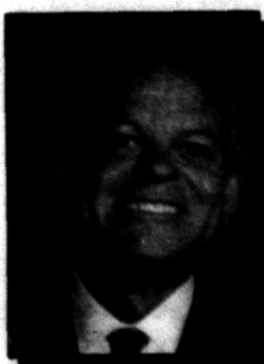
"We must determine that when we know someone is a sexual predator, we will expose him and bring charges against him for his crimes, whether he is a pastor, a member of the staff or a member of the church," Chapman said. "We cannot stand by and refuse to stand up against these vile criminals and allow them to practice their evil deeds."

The report from the Executive Committee, submitted after two years of study, said the "potential threat of sex abuse" at the local church level "is tragically underappreciated." The report urges churches to screen prospective volunteers and employees through the Department of Justice's national database, found at <http://www.nsopr.gov>. A link also is available from www.sbc.net.

The committee rejected suggestions that it recommend creating a Southern Baptist database of sexual offenders. Such a database, the report said, would have its shortcomings.

"[U]se of the most comprehensive database available was opted for over creating a

See SBC, page two

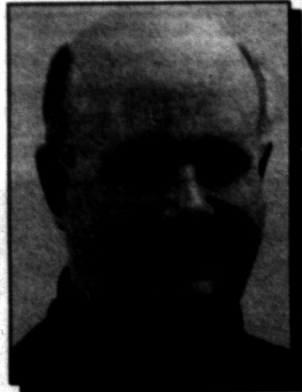


Hunt

What I saw at the convention

The 2008 Southern Baptist Convention is now history. It's odd to think that the SBC only exists for a couple of days in June; the rest of the year, it exists in something close to a Diaspora, with people who claim the name of Southern Baptists scattered throughout our country and world.

We have a unique system of handling our convention. For one, churches elect "messengers," not "delegates." That's not just a semantic issue, for each messenger doesn't bring any authority from the churches over the Convention, nor do they take any authority from the Convention back to the churches. Cooperation, from bottom to top, is all strictly voluntary. So, during this meeting in Indianapolis — as has been the case since 1845 — messengers make decisions relative to the worldwide ministry of Southern Baptists, and when those decisions are made, Convention entities and the SBC Executive Committee are charged with carrying out those assignments. (There might be more to be said concerning how about 7,300 messengers determine the course of a



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16 million-plus member denomination, but we'll let it go at that for now.)

So ... does it "work?" Apparently so. Our whole system is based on trust, and when that trust is called into question, problems can occur, but the 2008 Convention was quite peaceful. There were some passionate discussions from the floor, mostly dealing with the wording of some of the resolutions offered up, but they were resolved in statesmanlike fashion, and cool heads prevailed. The election of a new president can be fraught with

intrigue, clandestine meetings, and all sorts of hallway discussions. Some people thrive on this. Even with six candidates, this election was non-contentious. (I will admit to noting, with horrified amusement, that one of the candidates was carrying around what looked like a yard sign, and another had campaign literature printed up and distributed outside the convention center.)

The number of messengers to the convention is in obvious decline — and, granted, this year's numbers might have as much to do with gas prices as apathy — but when retired LifeWay Christian Resources President Jimmy Draper says that the SBC is in "freefall," well, that gets my attention. It might be premature to start lining up pallbearers, but it sure wouldn't hurt to keep a close eye on trends, and the "why's" behind those trends. The Convention isn't getting any younger — most of the messengers I saw, so identified by their name tags on lanyards, were 50 or older. There were several younger folks, certainly, but they didn't bear visible credentials. Most were working the booths for the seminaries and colleges, or working registration, or at the bookstore, or singing with a choral group. Were these folks unidentified messengers, or were they there as workers and volunteers, and basically disengaged or disinterested in Convention work? Hard to say.

One thing is certain, however — Mississippi was well-represented in Indianapolis. Program and platform leaders abounded. Jim Futral, executive-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, preached in the Sunday worship service June 8, 10:30 a.m., during the meeting of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions. Lavon Gray, minister of music and worship at First Church,

Jackson, was the convention music director, charged with the responsibility of managing the musical elements of the entire convention. Graham Smith, director of the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, led in congregational praise and worship. Wade Steelman, associational missions director of the X-tended Missions Network in Hernando, led in prayer Tuesday evening. David Young, contract consultant for the Church Music department and director of the Mississippi Baptist Symphony Orchestra, led in concert, as did Edd Brashier, associate minister of music at First Church, Jackson. First Church, Jackson also led in worship with their choir, orchestra, worship team and band, and soloists. Certainly other Mississippians led in visible and not-so-visible ways, and to try to note them all would mean that someone would be left out. God knows who they are, and knows they serve with integrity.

These were program personalities, but the pillar and ground of the Convention is made up of those pastors, staff people, laypeople, associational missions directors, and others who made the trek to Indianapolis from Mississippi, to both represent their churches and their convictions. I ran across Mississippians at every turn, enjoying the fellowship, sharing in worship, and tending to the business set before them.

We Southern Baptists take great pride in being self-governing in our local churches. We are free to build, to spend, to call pastor and staff, without interference from "governing bodies." Yet we also stress voluntary cooperation. Fortunately, freedom and cooperation do not conflict with each other, and that is the beauty of our system. It was a treat to see those guiding principles in place and working, once again.

SBC

database that would be limited in scope," the report said. "Any convicted sex offender, regardless of religious affiliation, is already listed in the Department of Justice's national database of convicted sex offenders."

Messengers passed nine resolutions, but one particular resolution concerning church membership and church member restoration seemed to stand out. As presented by the Committee on Resolutions, it urged Southern Baptist churches to "maintain a regenerate membership by acknowledging the necessity of spiritual regeneration and Christ's lordship for all members, ... maintain accurate membership rolls for the purpose of fostering ministry and accountability among all members of the congregation and... implement a plan to minister to, counsel, and restore wayward church members based upon the commands and principles given in Scripture."

That language stayed, but messengers approved two floor amendments, including one amendment that added four new paragraphs. Among the most significant changes, the new language urges SBC churches "to repent of the failure among us to live up to our professed commitment to regenerate church membership and any failure to obey Jesus Christ in the practice of

lovingly correcting wayward church members."

Additionally, the new language states that messengers "humbly encourage denominational servants to support and encourage churches that seek to recover and implement our Savior's teachings on church discipline, even if such efforts result in the reduction in the number of members that are reported in those churches."

A full copy of the resolution is available online at www.sbc.net/resolutions/amResolution.asp?ID=1189.

In other matters:

• International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin used part of his report to reflect on the rapid growth of the Gospel in the decade following the IMB's New Directions campaign. Launched in 1997, New Directions was a paradigm shift that reorganized the board's structure and strategy in order to intensify its focus on the world's unreached people groups.

Rankin said while working closely with national partners, those missionaries have seen baptisms double from 308,000 in 1997 to more than 609,900 in 2007. Numbers of new church starts also jumped dramatically, from 3,352 in 1997 to more than 25,000 last year.

Much more needs to be done, Rankin said, if the world's lost are to be reached. Dickie Nelson,

regional leader for IMB work in South America, told messengers that more than half of South America's 700-plus people groups still have little or no Christian witness.

• Messengers adopted resolutions urging Southern Baptists in California to work and vote for a proposed constitutional marriage amendment there and for all Southern Baptists and other Christians to pray for its passage; celebrating the 60th anniversary of the state of Israel and encouraging prayers on its behalf; calling for Congress to eliminate funding for Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider, and encouraging voters to evaluate political candidates based on their affiliation with the organization; and celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Royal Ambassadors while giving thanks for the tens of thousands of boys who have been saved and the more than two million boys who have gone through the program.

• Korean Baptist leader Billy Kim, president of the Far East Broadcasting Company and former president of the Baptist World Alliance, received the Distinguished Baptist Statesman Award from the Executive Committee for his lifelong service in global evangelism and leadership among Baptists.

• Crossover, the annual outreach to share the Gospel throughout the host city, saw

759 people make professions of faith. Approximately 500 volunteers braved a rain-soaked weekend and participated in the event, always held prior to the annual meeting.

• LifeWay Christian Resources announced its 2009 Vacation Bible School (VBS) themes. The theme of the main VBS line is Boomerang Express: It All Comes Back to Jesus, based on a visit to Australia.

The Club VBS theme is Truth Trek: Digging for God's Treasures, and focuses on an archaeological dig. About 26% of the total number of baptisms in SBC churches in 2007 were a direct result of VBS, said Jerry Wooley, VBS specialist at LifeWay. — Bill Henard, pastor of Porter Memorial Church in Lexington, Ky., was elected first vice president, and John Newland, pastor of Fall Creek Church in Indianapolis, was elected second vice president.

John Yeats, director of communications for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, was re-elected SBC recording secretary, and Jim Wells, director of missions for the Tri-County Association in Nixa, Mo., was re-elected registration secretary.

John Marshall, pastor of Second church in Springfield, Mo., was elected to preach the convention sermon at the 2009 annual meeting in Louisville, Ky.

Pastors gather for pre-convention meeting

INDIANAPOLIS (BP and local reports) — After severe thunderstorms caused flooding in various parts of Indiana two days earlier, pastors from across the United States gathered to seek a spiritual downpour from God at the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference June 9 in Indianapolis.

"Our prayer is that God would use this conference to ripple through this country and that the showers of the blessings of God would be seen all across this land in our churches in the days and weeks and months ahead," said Pascagoula native Michael Catt, Pastors' Conference president and senior pastor of Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga.

The conference theme, Prepare for Rain, challenged pastors to focus on revival through prayer, brokenness and evangelism. Sunday evening's theme was Preparing Our Fields for an Outpouring, and was based on Hosea 10:12, which says in part: "Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord."

The evening featured Johnny Hunt, senior pastor of First Church in Woodstock, Ga.; Daniel Simmons, senior pastor of Mt. Zion Church in Albany, Ga.; and Tom Elliff, senior vice president for spiritual nurture and church relations for the Southern Baptist Convention' (SBC) International Mission Board and a former SBC president.

Hunt, preaching from Psalm 119:25-32, addressed a recent statistical report that SBC membership had declined over the previous year. "If there's not prayer that leads to brokenness and God sending revival, there will not be the evangelism we Southern Baptists have known through the years," he said.

Simmons, in his message, proclaimed that God and prayer are the keys to revival. If churches are not experiencing revival, he said, it might be because pastors are trusting in their own resources and abilities.

"I disease has hindered us," Simmons said. "We have gotten to the place where we think we are important people. We must understand it's not us."

Citing Hosea 10:13, Simmons said God's message to the people was, "As long as you trust in other resources, I won't give you mine."

Elliff, in the evening's final message, extended an invitation for pastors to "break up their fallow ground" by coming to the altar at God's invitation. Ministers should accept God's invitation because it is a command in Scripture, Elliff said, pointing to Hosea 10:12, which states, "Sow to your-

selves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rains righteousness on you."

Breaking up a heart's fallow ground requires "deliberate effort and deliberate work," Elliff said, likening the hardness of many hearts to the tough soil settlers were forced to work with in Oklahoma 100 years ago as the land rush began. That soil, he said, was hard, stubbornly resistant, unfruitful and "asleep through the seasons."

After his message, thousands of pastors flooded the front of the convention center floor to repent and ask God to pour out His Spirit and blessings on them, their churches and the nation.

More than 1,000 Southern Baptists attended a June 8 screening of Fireproof, the third film produced by Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., that was held in conjunction with the Pastor's Conference.

"As leaders and influencers... we hope you will help us get people into the theater and pray that God will use the movie to impact homes across the country," Catt said.

Fireproof chronicles the impact of selfishness, financial struggles, emotional adultery, and Internet pornography on the seven-year marriage of firefighter Caleb Holt and his wife Catherine, a public relations executive.

Actor Kirk Cameron, perhaps best known for his roles in the 1980s TV series Growing Pains, and the later the Left Behind movie series, plays the role of Holt, whose constant mantra to his team is, "Never leave your partner behind, especially in a fire."

When his wife tells him she wants a divorce, Holt realizes the contradiction between his commitment to run into a burning building to save a stranger but falling short in his marriage. With the help of his father, Holt takes up the challenging and often discouraging struggle to revive his marriage.

"It's very important for churches to see this movie because of the negative effect divorce is having on churches," said Greg Carroll, one of the pastors who saw the movie. "I think that in most churches, we mask this prob-



CONFERENCE LEADER — Pascagoula native Michael Catt, senior pastor of Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., and president of the 2008 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, encourages pastors attending the two-day conference to purchase CD's of scheduled speakers. The annual meeting precedes the June 10-11 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. (BP photo)

lem and act like it isn't there," said Carroll, of Truett Memorial First Church in Hayesville, N.C.

"The movie made me ask myself if my marriage is a '10,'" Carroll added. "It's too easy for me to reflect on 30 years of marriage and the fact that my wife teaches Sunday School and I preach three times a week. That makes me think everything is hunky-dory but the movie made me realize my marriage is not a 10, and there are some things I need to work on."

Erin Bethea, who plays opposite Cameron in the role of Catherine Holt, said the movie "challenged me more for the future as far as setting a reality of how difficult marriage is. Young girls a lot of time think it's the wedding and the honeymoon, but that's not what marriage is."

Bethea, a longtime member of Sherwood who now lives in Orlando, Fla., added, "Aside from the lessons that are in the movie, one of the biggest lessons I learned in making the movie was about taking a leap of faith, because I had to quit my job to do the movie."

"I lost everything when I

quit my job and came to Albany for two months to shoot the movie voluntarily," Bethea said. "I just knew it was the right thing to do."

About a week before shooting ended, Bethea's former employer called her to offer a better job at better pay. She said she could see God's hand of protection and reward in her willingness to step out in faith on behalf of the movie.

Following the screening, Sherwood's executive pastor, Jim McBride — who played the antagonistic, lollipop-sucking coach in Facing the Giants, Sherwood's second movie — encouraged viewers to check the www.fireproofthemovie.com website to see if Fireproof will open at a theater in or near their town.

The film is set for release Sept. 26 in about 800 theaters, but McBride added that pastors, churches, and Baptist associations can form "action squads" to bring the movie to their town. Information about action squads can be found at the website.

McBride encouraged the audience to help ensure a strong opening weekend so that distributors of the movie would broaden the release to other cities.

Looking back

10 YEARS AGO

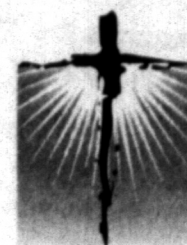
Jerry Falwell registers himself and seven members of Thomas Road Church, Lynchburg, Va., as voting messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention for the first time.

20 YEARS AGO

In a 31-29 vote, the Southern Baptist Convention executive committee tables a motion by committee member Paul Pressler of Houston, Texas, to force Baptist Press news service to respond to a litany of criticisms. Committee member Frank Ingram of Nashville made the motion to table.

50 YEARS AGO

Robert E. Naylor, pastor of Travis Avenue Church, Fort Worth, Tex., is elected president of Southwestern Seminary, after the death of president J. Howard Williams.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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**YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!**

*Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:*

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eternal
death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my
sins and to restore my rela-
tionship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus
Christ into my life. From this
time on, I want to live in a lov-
ing relationship with Him. (I
receive Christ as my Savior
and Lord.)

*"But as many as received him,
to them he gave the right to become
children of God, even to those who
believe in his name." (John 1:12)*

*If you make a decision for
Jesus Christ today, contact a
local Baptist church for spiritu-
al guidance.*

THRESHOLD OF ANNOYANCE

There is nothing scientific about this, but through the years I have observed the annoyances in people's lives. One observation is that everybody seems to have a different level of annoyances. What bothers you may not bother me and what disturbs me may cause you to think that I have a serious problem. We just have different things that bug us.

In addition to that observation, I have learned not to tell other folks what annoys me. Now I know that goes against the grain and against common thought because I see many people voicing loud and long about the things that bring great stress in their lives. The reason I think that is not very smart is because when people know what it is that ticks you off they are more than likely to start doing that and will probably do it at the most inopportune moment in your life to cause you the greatest maximum top level stress. If they know what annoys you, just look for the fingernails-on-the-blackboard experience at some time coming from them.

A third thought about annoying features of our lives is the fact that it seems, not in total but at least in part, to be one of the defining aspects of our existence. What drives people crazy helps us understand who they are. Now to back up just a little bit, I must tell you that what got me off on this annoyance tangent was a recent Saturday morning at a soccer game. Of course, there were things happening with the weather, the referees, and other people gathered at the field that might have been annoying but that was not what caught my attention. All of my grandkids that are old enough are involved in some sporting activity. Of course, we try to be at as many games as possible to see them and to cheer them on in the game. It is one of life's fun and rewarding rites of passage.

Part of the sporting equipment that is needed by grandparents is the obligatory collapsible, carry-over-your-shoulder seats. We have worn out several, but at the present time, we have a red one and a blue one. I honestly do not know where we got them or why we got those col-



Directions

*Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board*

ors. I am generally the "get them out of the trunk, carry them across the way, pull them out of the bag, set them up" person in charge. At this particular sporting event, the game was over and we were getting ready to leave. I was folding up the chairs and putting them down in their carrying bags when a conversation began about the way I was doing it. I did not ask for the conversation and I actually was not participating in the conversation, but it was going on around me and about me.

Here is the deal. There is a red chair and a blue chair and, of course, a red carrying bag and a blue carrying bag. As I was loading them up as I generally do, I was putting the red chair in the blue bag. Then I was putting the blue chair in the red bag. I thought it made a good contrast and I normally did it that way. The people who were discussing my methodology did not seem to think that I was doing it right. One person said that maybe I was a trendsetter. Another just kind of shook his head like, "Why would he do that?" Another said, "Well, he does it all of the time and it drives me crazy!" It was the first time I knew that they were annoyed at my cross-colored combination of chair folding. As the tidbits of comments and criticism continued, I finally felt obligated to participate in the discussion. I finished my work, looked up, and said, "I never knew this was such a big deal to anybody, but I can tell you this: any of you who would like to do it differently and would take care of this part of my life can do it exactly like you want to and carry it over there and put it in the trunk of my car. It will not bother me in the

least." Oh, no, they were not going to do that and so I picked up my chairs and walked off. I put them in the trunk where they probably will stay for a week or two and never be seen by anybody until I take them out, carry them back to another soccer field, and annoy another group of people because I have a red chair in a blue bag and visa versa.

What is your threshold of annoyance? Some people seem to be delighted to be annoyed by anything, everything, and everybody. They act as though it is their spiritual gift and they have been appointed by God to be annoyed. Other people seem as though they are not bugged by anything. Whatever is happening they just truck on and the irritants of life just seem to be like water off a duck's back to them.

I suppose we need both kinds of folks and to some degree it seems as though we are just wired up that way, but if you are one of the folks that just stays irritated about every little thing that comes along, I would encourage you to back off just a little bit, find some biblical resources, grace, mercy, and long-suffering to give the other fellow a break. The fact is that some things that annoy us do not make any difference at all except to rob us of joy.

If you are intolerant of the slightest difference in life, you probably stay pretty tensed up. I have a friend who is a musician. He has suffered through life being plagued with perfect pitch. He told me he could never remember going to church and being able to sit through and enjoy an entire worship service because he can hear the slight-

est wrong note that is struck on the piano or organ. When it happens, his day is shattered and he cringes for the rest of the service. The sad thing is that he is so annoyed by a wrong note that he cannot celebrate the otherwise giftedness of the person and the dedication of those gifts to the glory of God.

I love music, but since I have not heard it with the natural ability and the giftedness of my friend's trained ear, I may have enjoyed music more than he has. The reason I say that is because often times the greatest blessing that I receive from music, whether it is being played or sung, has little to do with striking the right note and holding it for its proper count so much as it has to do with the sweet spirit and the great heart of the person who is presenting it. It might be worth the time, effort, and spiritual investment to ask God to work in your life and help you to be more understanding, more tolerant, and more lenient toward other people and the way they go about living their lives. You may find that the result will be that you enjoy people more and have better relationships when you are not annoyed all of the time by everything.

Have you noticed that people who are annoyed by everything around them are usually the most annoying people in the room? The Lord did not design us to be proclaimers of our annoyances so much as He wants us to be channels of His blessings. If my red chair in a blue bag annoys you, I have a remedy to try to help with the problem. You can come and fix it like you want it and carry it to my car. Thereby you will be happy and your help will bless me. As you travel through this week going to church, work, and getting together with your family and friends, keep your eyes wide open not for the things that annoy you but for opportunities where you can be a blessing.

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at jfutral@mbcb.org.*

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MS POSITIONS

FBC OF EUPORA, MISS. IS NOW accepting resumes for the position of youth minister. Send resumes to fbceyouth@gmail.com or FBC-Search, P.O. Box 268, Eupora, MS 39744.

FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC. Parkview Baptist Church, Greenville, Miss., is seeking a full-time minister of music. Please send resume to personnel committee, 712 McAllister St., Greenville, MS 38701, or email to parkviewp@bellsouth.net.

TWO POSITIONS: CENTRAL BAPTIST Church, Brookhaven, Miss., is accepting resumes for a full-time minister of music/outreach & full-time minister of students/college. Send resumes to 749

N. Jackson Street, Brookhaven, MS 39601 or email to questions@cbcb-brookhaven.org.

FBC CORINTH, MISS., IS SEEKING A full-time minister of preschool & children. Send resume to FBC, c/o search committee, 501 Main St., Corinth, MS 38834.

SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH, MARSHALL County, Miss. Seeking part-time youth director with potential for growth. Please send resume to search committee, P.O. Box 734, Potts Camp, MS 38659.

FBC, RIDGELAND, MISS., IS ACCEPTING resumes for ministry/financial assistant. Submit resume to FBC, personnel committee, 302 W. Jackson Street, Ridgeland, MS 39157 or email to stewart@epaofms.com.

NEEDED: PIANIST FOR MT. MORIAH Baptist Church, Marwood Loop, Bogue Chitto, Miss. This is a salary position. For more information call 601-833-8858 or 601-810-6149.

YOUTH MINISTER NEEDED: MT. MORIAH Baptist Church, Lincoln county, is seeking a youth minister. For more information, please send resume, with at least 5 references, to search committee, Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, 814 Marwood Loop, SE, Bogue Chitto, MS 39629, 601-833-8858.

LAUDERDALE COUNTY CHURCH seeks part-time minister of music. Send resume to Briarwood Baptist Church, P.O. Box 3231, Meridian, MS 39303.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

June 19, 2008

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

Above All MUSIC *Leadership* CONFERENCE

First Baptist Church, Jackson
JULY 10-12, 2008

Conference begins at 12:30 on Thursday
and ends at noon on Saturday

WORSHIP/GENERAL

L. Graham Smith
Jimmy McCaleb
Bryant Barnes
Steve Hamrick
Tim Moak
Greg Nelson

HANDBELLS

Michele Smith
R.E. Thompson

KEYBOARD/PIANO/ ORGAN

Wendy South
Jeff Bennett
Ron and Linda Sprunger

PRESCHOOL/ CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Sarah Talley
Neva Hayley
Keith Watson
Vannah Close

INSTRUMENTAL

David Young

YOUTH

Susan Luttrell
Tony Higginbotham

COST OF CONFERENCE \$30

Register by July 1, 2008.

For more information
call the Church Music Department at 601-292-3267,
or refer to the 2008 Noted Events Booklet.

There will be no child care available.

Make check payable to
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
and mail to
Church Music Department Leadership Conference
P. O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205
by June 30, 2008



MISSISSIPPI

Family *TEST*

on the Gulf Coast July 26-30, 2008

Location: Jackson County

Cost: \$25 per person (\$50 maximum for immediate family members), includes program fee, t-shirt, breakfast and lunch meals, plus dinner on Wednesday evening.

Types of Ministries: Light Construction/ Painting, Community Service & Outreach, Children's Ministries, Acts of Kindness

How to Register: Request a registration packet by calling MS wMu at 800-748-1651, ext. 317, or 601-292-3317, or E-mail lmiller@mbcb.org.

This event is co-sponsored by the Family Ministry Team, Men's Ministry, Mississippi wMu, Jackson Association, and participating local churches.

For more information, please contact Don Gann (dgann@mbcb.org) in Men's Ministry or Tammy Anderson (tanderson@mbcb.org) in Mississippi wMu at 800-748-1651.

FOR ALL BOYS AND GIRLS WHO HAVE COMPLETED GRADES 3-7



Cost \$95
with \$50
deposit
due with
preregistration

CENTRAL HILLS BAPTIST RETREAT: JUNE 30-JULY 2

Bible study, Bible memorization, Bible skill, worship, campfire service, morning watch, time with Southern Baptist missionaries, horseback riding, rifle range [safety/marksmanship], swimming, canoeing, four-square ... **and much more!**

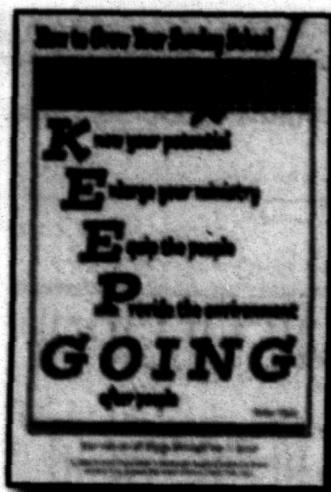
Each church group must have an adult male counselor for every six boys (or portion thereof) and an adult female counselor for every six girls (or portion thereof). Campers are together with the counselors from their church all during camp.

Camp begins with check-in at 2 p.m., Monday, June 30, and ends at noon on Wednesday, July 2.

For more info, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
601-292-3287 or dhicks@mbcb.org

FLAKE'S FORMULA *Super Saturday* SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE

- * New Teachers
- * Advanced Teachers
- * Evangelism



**THIS YEAR'S
THEME**
FELLOWSHIP:
How to
enrich the
congregation and
reach the
community
through
PURPOSEFUL
FELLOWSHIP

DATE	
Saturday, July 19	First Baptist Church, Pontotoc
SCHEDULE	
9:00 a.m.	Opening Session
9:15	Session 1
	Flake's Formula and Fellowship
11:15	Electives
Noon	Dismiss

Each Participant will receive:

- Specific ideas on how FELLOWSHIP can strengthen your Sunday School and help reach your community for Christ
- Age graded conferences for every leader
- The complete book, *Flake's Formula for the Future*

* Elective conferences
in every age group!

For more information, contact the Sunday
School Department at 601-292-3291 or
1-800-748-1651 or E-mail cday@mbcb.org

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Innovative Ministry

For more information,
contact:
Gulf Coast Association
228-832-4311 or

MBCB
Discipleship and Family
Ministry Department
1-800-748-1651, ext. 373
or 601-292-3373

*Discipleship
Rallies*



**CHILDREN'S
RALLY**



**YOUTH
RALLY**



**ADULT
RALLY**



Your Margaret Mackey girls started 8 new churches and provided ongoing support for nearly 10 church planters. Encourage your church to support the state missions offering this Fall.

Pastor *Wife* RETREAT

July 17-19
Lake Tiak O'Khata
Louisville



"Providing a time of encouragement,
inspiration and fellowship for the
pastor and his wife"

The total cost for the first 20
couples who register
will be reduced by \$75!



Edwin &
Joan Jenkins

For more information, call Pastor/Leadership Development,
(601) 292-3305 or 1-800-748-1651

The Minister's Health

Three Critical Concepts to Change Your Ministry

July 28
Tri-County
Association Office
Columbia

July 29
North Oxford BC
Oxford

S P E A K E R
Barney Self, Ed. D.
Licensed marriage
and family therapist

SCHEDULE

8:45 a.m.	Welcome
9 a.m.	Compassion, Fatigue and Boundaries
10:30 a.m.	Break
10:45 a.m.	Margins
noon	Dismiss

TO REGISTER:
Contact Kay McDonnell:
at 1.800.748.1651, ext. 305
601.292.3305,
E-mail: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org.



State Literacy Missions Conference

July 17-19, Crossgates BC, Brandon

Called to Love – Matthew 22:37-39



Seminars for those already working in a literacy ministry or wanting to begin.

BASIC WORKSHOPS IN:

- ARW (Adult Reading & Writing)
- ESL (English as a Second Language)
- TCY (Tutoring Children and/or Youth)
- EFL (English as a Foreign Language)
- CBS (Chronological Bible Storying)

EXPERIENCED LEADERS CONFERENCES will be offered

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Gayle Leininger, recently retired NAMB Literacy Missions Missionary
Kendale Moore, current NAMB Literacy Missions Missionary

REGISTRATION DEADLINE, JULY 3

For more information and registration form contact:
Paula Smith, MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205
psmith@mbcb.org or 1-800-748-1651

SMALL/BIVOCATIONAL CHURCH PASTOR'S WORKSHOP

Monday, June 30 **Tuesday, July 1**
Auburn BC Easthaven BC
Tupelo Brookhaven

LEADERSHIP:
The Jonathan Model, I Samuel 14

- Effective Leaders*
- Recognize Priority
 - Understand Reality
 - Make Decisions
 - Develop Plans

Barry Campbell
Director, Eastern Region, LifeWay Christian
Resources, Southern Baptist Convention

FOR MORE INFO Contact Kay McDonnell
at 1.800.748.1651, ext. 305, 601.292.3305, E-mail: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org.

THIS YEAR'S SKILLSHOPS

Professional Certification
for Ministry Assistants
and
Ministry Office SkillsShops
August 12-14, 2008

Watch for info ...
coming soon

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MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST YOUTH NIGHT



FRANCIS CHAN
GUEST SPEAKER



STEVE FEE
WORSHIP LEADER



July 18, 2008

Mississippi Coliseum, 6:30 p.m.
Doors open at 5:45 p.m.

No cost • No registration • Love offering taken

For more info, contact the Evangelism Department: 601-292-3280
1-800-748-1651, ext. 280, or E-mail: jellis@mbcb.org

Pray this day for...

June 20-July 10, 2008

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness - add fear.
1 Peter 3:15

Pray for God's wisdom for pastors today. Pray that they will not let the many demands of their ministry crowd out their most important personal time of worship with the Lord. Pray that they will keep their immediate family in a place of prominence on their schedule. And, thank your pastor today!

(1) Citizenship & Religious Liberty (CAC Emphasis); (2) Pray for our Christian hospitals and their staffs. Pray for the staff to grow in their personal relationship with the Lord, and that they may be effective witnesses to their patients and their families. Pray that they may be self-supporting.

Pray that God would mold the body of Christ into Christlikeness so that our lives are a true picture of what God is like. *Let Others See Jesus in You.*

(1) Kids Camp, Central Hills Baptist Retreat, Kosciusko, 23rd-25th (SS); (2) HeartSong Youth Music Worship Arts Camp, William Carey University, Hattiesburg, 23rd-27th (CM); (3) GA/Acteens Summer Camp, Garaywa, Clinton, 23rd-27th (wMu).

(1) Bible Drill Camp, Central Hills Baptist Retreat, 30th-2nd (D&FM); (2) GA Summer Camp, Garaywa, Clinton, 30th-4th (wMu); (3) Small/Bivocational Church Pastor's Workshop, Auburn, BC, Tupelo (P/LD). Pray for wisdom for bivo pastors in how to manage their time with their multiple responsibilities.

(1) Summer Missions Camp for Boys, Central Hills Baptist Retreat, 7th-11th (MM); (2) GA/Acteens Summer Camp, Garaywa, 7th-11th (wMu). Pray that the children attending the above camps will totally commit their hearts and lives to the service of Jesus Christ.

Pray for the ministers of music in our churches. Pray for God's direction upon their preparation of the weekly music program. They should consider the awesome responsibility before God of leading the church into the place of respectful, reverential and truth-proclaiming corporate worship.

(1) Small/Bivocational Church Pastor's Workshop, Easthaven BC, Brookhaven (P/LD). Pray for the pastors of small churches where there are not as many church staff. Pray for laymen to see the needs and be supportive of their pastors by helping to take care of the congregation and various needs of the church.

Pray for Christians throughout the world who are being persecuted for their faith. Their prayer requests are that they will have the courage to not deny the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they will love their enemies. Christians in persecuted countries now number approximately the population of the USA.

Pray for the ministers of education in our churches. Pray that they will be sensitive to the specific needs of their congregation. Pray also for wisdom as they oversee a wide span of age groups in their responsibilities. Pray for caring and gifted laymen to volunteer for the various positions in education.

Pray: (1) that church members will grow in their walk with the Lord; (2) that they will see the need to spend personal time each day in God's Word, asking Him to search their hearts and show them how to walk more closely with Him; (3) and, that they will make decisions consistent with God's Word.

Pray for the church secretaries and other support staff of our local churches. Pray that they will find great joy and fulfillment in their ministry, which is often unseen. Take the time to do something special for those who work in your local church to let them know you appreciate their service.

(1) Kids' Camp, Central Hills Baptist Retreat, Kosciusko, 26th-28th (SS); (2) Pray for the Southern Baptist Convention and its new officers this coming year. Pray that we may reach more lost for Christ and disciple them to a place of maturity, loving God with all of their heart and faithfully serving Him.

Missionary teams worldwide work under stress and pressure. Pray that each person would do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than themselves. And, that each of them would look not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others (Phil. 2:3-4).

(1) Music Leadership Conference, FBC, Jackson, 10th-12th (CM). Pray for the many speakers and staff of this conference to implant a fresh vision of worship in the hearts of the participants. Pray that Mississippi churches will be a shining example of Bible-based, Christ-centered, God-exalting worship.

Pray for all of the Vacation Bible Schools and special children's activities going on throughout the summer months. Pray that God will draw many unchurched children to these activities and open their minds and hearts to understand that God loves them and desires that they know Him.

(1) V Summer Youth Camp, Hinds Community College, Raymond, 21st - 25th (SS). Pray that the camp leadership will be wise and sensitive to the God's leadership as they minister to the youth attending the camp.

Pray for all our pastors in Mississippi and especially those who have health problems. Pray for all the workers in our churches, their health and the effectiveness of their work. Pray for church members to show appreciation for their church staff.

Pray that new churches will be started with many new believers. Pray for these new Christians to be active in serving Christ in the church. Pray for encouragement for church planting pastors as they seek to reach areas where there is no established work.

(1) INDEPENDENCE DAY (2) Pray for our nation in the area of the preservation of traditional marriage. Pray for those who do not understand the importance of God's plan for both their own lives and the lives of others. Pray that they will enter into the blessing of uniting according to God's plan.

Pray for the seminary professors of our denomination. Pray that they will measure all that they teach according to God's Word. Pray that God will give them wisdom and insight into how to best teach their students. Pray for God's provision for the many financial challenges of seminary students.

Mississippi wMu 130th Annual Meeting

August 22-23, Garaywa

(held in conjunction with Missions Leadership Training)

Annual Meeting: 10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Lunch: 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Reservations for lunch are required.

Missions Leadership Training (MLT) for the church

(sponsored by MS wMu and Men's Ministry)

3 locations to choose from ...

Missions Leadership Training is for all church staff and missions leaders.

August 15-16, 2008

FBC, Biloxi

as part of ...

"Glorieta on the Gulf"

Registration Fee: \$10

(Early Bird: \$5 until 7/31/08)

Contact the Gulf Coast Association for a registration form: 228-832-4311

August 22-23, 2008

Garaywa Camp and Conference Center

including

wMu Annual Meeting

Registration Deadline for housing & meals: 8-8-08

August 26, 2008

Emmanuel BC

Grenada, Miss.

6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

No registration required

Called to Love ...

Amazing Race



wMu Annual Meeting

Special Guest: Kay Miller

National WMU President

For more information, contact Lisa Miller at 601-292-3317, 1-800-748-1651, ext. 317, or lmiller@mbcb.org

HOUSE TOPS



1. Jolly

1. Randy Jolly has been named director of Mississippi College's Gore Galleries in Clinton. Jolly holds a bachelor's degree in fine arts from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and a master's degree in education from Mississippi College.

2. Mississippi College will hold freshman orientation on the Clinton campus on June 20-21 and July 11-12. Orientation for transfer students will be held July 10. For more information, call (601) 925-3800 or toll-free (800) 738-1236.

3. Mississippi College will honor award-winning arts educators at a 6-8 p.m. reception June 19 at the Gore Galleries on the Clinton campus. Honorees include Randy Miley, MC art department chairman; Vicky Miley, art instructor at MC and Pearl High School, Pearl; and Stephanie Busbea, MC art instructor.

4. Mississippi College supporters who gathered at the June 10 MC reception at Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Indianapolis

included (from left) Kellie Kitchings, Bobby Walden, Hal Kitchings, and Libby Walden. The Kitchings are members of Germantown Church, Germantown, Tn., where Hal serves as pastor, and the Waldens are members of First Church, Jackson.

5. Blue Mountain College recognized Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, for "excellence in servant leadership" at its recent alumnae weekend, Homecoming on the Hill. The church was lauded for its longtime relationship with the college. Pictured are (from left) BMC President Bettye R. Coward and Morrison Heights Church members Ginger and Phil Davis.



4. SBC Supporters



5. Morrison Heights recognized

1. Bible Drill participants at Ingomar Church, New Albany, included (from left) Ben Dixon, Rose Cobb (Drill leader), Lorie Nance, Haley Taylor, Shelby Newell, Tori Baldwin, Alex Diaz, and Gary Linville (associate pastor).
2. Hebron Church, Bentonla, recently held Bible Drills. Pictured are youth and children participants.



1. Ingomar Church, New Albany



2. Hebron Church, Bentonla

CLASSIFIED ADS

STAINED GLASS: NEW WINDOWS and repairs. Hopper Stained Glass, Jackson, 877-477-1899.

SEBREN'S SIDING, JACKSON, CHRISTIAN owned. All home improvements, vinyl siding, windows, metal and shingle roofs, patio covers, screen and glass rooms. 601-992-2092, Don & Rita Sebren, owners.

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THE LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN BEACH Retreat and Conference Center, Orange Beach, Alabama. Directly on the Gulf of Mexico. Ideal for church beach retreats. From 10 to 150 people, \$30 per night per person. A ministry of Romar Beach Baptist Church. Call Don at 251-752-2366.

REASONABLY PRICED INSURANCE: Medicare supplements, major medical, & small group health insurance plans available for individuals & churches. Call Carra Turner 662 231-4487 for rates or visit www.turnerinsuranceonline.com.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, free estimates. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone 601-776-6617.

FOR SALE: 2004 E450 26 PASSENGER bus, 13K miles, diesel engine. For more information, call Brad Crowder at 662-620-5155.

DISCOUNT BAPTISTRIES & STEEPLES. Baptist murals, heaters, lighting, seating, wall crosses, pew cushions, krinkglas, carpet, signs. Church Supply Company of Texas, 800-728-8291.

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FBC THOMSON, GEORGIA, is seeking a full time Minister of Music. For a job description, go to www.firstbaptistthomson.org and click minister of music. Send resumes to Dr. Jim

Ramsey, Pastor, at jramsey@firstbaptistthomson.org or P.O. Box 1205, Thomson, GA 30824.

FBC OF RIPLEY, IN WEST TENNESSEE, is seeking a full-time pastor to lead our congregation averaging 240 in Sunday morning worship. Send resume to FBC, attn: pastor search committee, P.O. Box 23, Ripley, TN 38063 or by email to pastorsearch@fbcirpley.org.

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH, A CONSERVATIVE Southern Baptist Church in North Alabama, is seeking a man of God to shepherd our congregation in a full time capacity. Seminary degree and experience preferred. Mail resumes to pastor search committee Faith Baptist Church, 3979 CO RD 434, Moulton, AL 35650. Email: fbc-pastorsearch@charterinternet.com.

IS YOUR CHURCH LOOKING TO relocate and build? Fifteen and 1/2 acres of prime real estate in Rankin county, with ongoing business. Call Thomas at 601-941-2613.

HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH IN Tullahoma, Tennessee, is accepting resumes for pastor. Seminary degree and minimum five years experience required. Please send resume to stones@cafes.net

or mail to Steve Stone - PSC, 203 Carol Lynne Ave., Tullahoma, TN 37388.

KOLA HOMESTEAD GUEST HOUSE for rent- Collins, Miss., 4 bedrooms. Sleeps up to 15 adults, 2 bath, full kitchen. Minutes from Grand Paradise Water Park, Okatoma Golf Course, & Mitchell Farms. Canoe the Okatoma, shop for antiques, 601-765-8812, www.themeadows-joycescatering.com.

GAMARI ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, Greenville, Miss., is in need of a van or SUV in good running condition. If you have one to donate, please call John Gentry at 662-390-6510.

PROMISE KEEPERS PLUS ADVENTURE- Fathers, Sons, Grandfathers July 30-August 2, 2 Day Atlanta Conference, Chatooga River Rafting, 4 day 3 nights \$450 pp-quad. All costs included. Purpose Driven Tours 601-371-8733.

NATIONAL QUARTET CONVENTION September 10-14 Louisville, Kentucky- Gaithers, Signature Sound, Triumphant and dozens more, singing News Awards, 5 days 4 nights \$795.00 pp/dbl. All costs included. Purpose Driven Tours 601-371-8733.

SPECIAL MUSIC FOR ANY CHURCH activity, program or service. Also

music and/or pulpit supply. Contact music evangelist, Ron Hamilton at 225-328-5961 or 601-583-3905.

PRESCHOOL MINISTER: FBC, Clarksville, Tenn., seeks a full-time minister to preschool to plan and coordinate a comprehensive ministry to preschool children and their families. Please send resumes to Ron Moore, 435 Madison Street, Clarksville, TN 37040.

IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE THERE are special dogs whose only task in life is to lead their masters back to the path of God's love. The Guardians is such a story. For more information visit www.lovingeyesare-watching.com or online at barne-sandnoble.com, borders.com, or amazon.com. Author: Richard Williams, published by Author House.

CONDO IN GATLINBURG FOR RENT: 2 bedrm, 2 bath, full kitchen. Walking distance to parkway, \$70.00/nite. Call for information 281-855-4469 or 832-922-0101/0141. Email pdw4760@att.net.

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DHYPN; HUG YPFX
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DFYRFFU WF HUG XJK,
YPHY XF WHX MUJR YPHY
Z HW YPF AJLG XJKL CJG.

FSFMZFA YRFUYX: YRFUYX

Clue: W=M

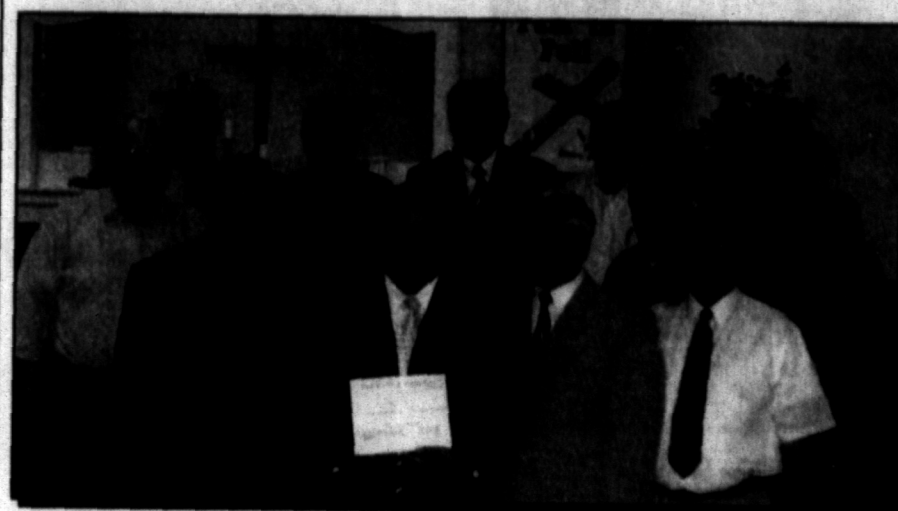
Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Isaiah Twenty-six Two

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. **West Church, West:** Revival, June 20-22. 7 p.m. nightly and 11 a.m. Sunday. James Clardy, speaker; Gary and Gale Sheppard, music; James Burrell, pastor.
2. **Faith Church, Silver Creek:** Revival, June 20-22. Friday, potluck dinner 6 p.m. and service 7 p.m.; Saturday, service 11 a.m. followed by lunch and 1:15 p.m. service; Sunday, Sunday School 10 a.m., service 11 a.m. followed by lunch, service 1:15 p.m.; Frank Lay, speaker; Margaret Lay, music; Ron Ballard, pastor.
3. **Wahalak Church, Scooba:** 175th Anniversary, June 22. Service 11 a.m. followed by lunch, music, and testimonies; celebration service 2 p.m. followed by a birthday tea.
4. **Unity Church, Moselle:** Homecoming and new facilities dedication; June 22; service 9:30 a.m. followed by lunch and 1:30 p.m. dedication service. Valton Douglas, pastor and speaker.
5. **Calvary Church, Greenwood:** Homecoming, June 22, 11 a.m. followed by potluck meal. Jimmy Wood, speaker; Benny Rigby, music; Wayne Kimbrough, pastor.
6. **Unity Church, Moselle:** Revival of Hope one-night revival, June 24 at 7 p.m. David Ring, speaker.
7. **Tocowa Church, Courtland:** Revival, June 25-27; 7 p.m. nightly. Gerald Finley, speaker; Wade Murphy and Connie Haley, music; Terrell McGreger, pastor.
8. **Bethel Church (Oxberry), Holcomb:** Revival, June 29-July 6; June 29, 5 p.m.; Mon.-Sat. 7 p.m.; July 6, 11 a.m. followed by pot luck lunch. Millard Caulder, speaker; Louise Lindley, music.
9. **Grace Church, Calhoun City:** Homecoming and 64th Anniversary, July 27; morning service 10:30 a.m. followed by lunch; afternoon service 1:30 p.m.; Carl Morris, morning speaker; Buford Usry, afternoon speaker. Lowery Guest, music. Carl Morris, pastor.

STATE CHANGES

1. Rory Dill was ordained to the Gospel ministry on June 1 at First Church, Myrick. Shown are Dill and men who participated in the ordination service.



1. First Church, Myrick

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Order FREE materials for your church to celebrate
Mission: Dignity Sunday on June 22.

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Assisting Retired Ministers and Spouses

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Word Power Made Wise

Proverbs 17:27-28; 18:20-21; 25:11-12; 26:20-22, 28

By Janice H. Fortenberry

Let me tell you a story. There once was a father who constantly belittled his children. He told them they looked like pigs, smelled like pigs and kept their rooms like pig pens. One morning he passed a son in the hallway and asked where the child was going. The boy replied, "Oink."

Of course this story isn't true but it surely illustrates the power words can have over the people in our lives. Words can lift up or tear down; they can help or hurt; they can affirm or destroy. Our words also reveal volumes about ourselves. This week's lesson comes from a section of Proverbs credited to Solomon written primarily in a "two-

part" style. The second part of each statement often contrasts dramatically with the first. The focal passages deal with the matter of our speech. They address the question we've all heard at one time or another: "Why shouldn't I say exactly what I think and let the chips fall where they may?"

The first passage (17: 27-28) is particularly painful for folks like me who often have mouths in gear but brains in neutral. We are told that a wise man is always the one of few words. Wisdom encourages us to choose our words carefully before we speak. I tend to do just the opposite. I often speak then think. Many of my biggest messes began with my mouth. Verse 28 drives the



Fortenberry

point home: "Even fools seem smart when they are quiet." (CEV)

A related proverb (15:28) is no more delicate in this matter of mousing off without thinking: "Good people think before they answer, but the wicked speak evil without ever thinking." (CEV)

Secondly, we are to respect the power of words (18:20-21) I teach a ladies Sunday school class and all of us in the class bear the scars of life at its most brutal. Our experiences have taught us to appreciate especially the first part of verse 21: "The tongue has the power of life and death." (NIV)

Each woman in the class has a very different story but the bottom line is the same: Trouble has blindsided us and taught us the meaning of God's grace. When we are together, we sometimes laugh and we also cry. But in the background I always hear a steady cadence of encouragement. These women know the

power of lifting each other up and they do it on a regular basis. I hear them telling each other, "Yes, you can," and "You can get through this." I shudder to think what would have happened to some of them if they had been subjected to words that pulled them down and discouraged them.

Scripture reveals that wise speech should also include truthfulness, gentleness, pleasantness and aptness (25: 11-12). I like the way a modern translation puts it: "The right word at the right time is like a custom-made piece of jewelry; and a wise friend's timely reprimand is like a gold ring slipped on your finger." (Message)

I've never been able to afford a custom pair of shoes but I suspect the fit is perfect. So it is with a good word from a wise friend. It's factual, it's earnest, it's gentle and it's just what I need when I need it. I think this passage has to do with guidance, and all of us need it at times. How precious it is when re-direction comes from someone who has our

best interest at heart and loves us unconditionally.

The focal passages also underscore the other end of the spectrum (26:20-22, 28) and, that is, gossiping, quarreling and insincerity. Lives can be—and often are—destroyed by passing along tales. Gossip fuels a quarrel just like wood fuels a fire (v. 20). Stop talking and the fire will go out!

We are to also avoid insincerity (v. 28). Don't tell me you love me unless you really do. Don't tell me you'll be there for me if you don't plan to. When I'm hurting, I need a friend who says what they mean and means what they say.

We all know children can't be literally turned into pigs. But we also know they can be made to feel like pigs. So it is with all of us. Typically, people live up—or down—to our expectations. We convey true power in what we say, when we say it and how we say it. Words can be wonderful when they're used wisely.

Fortenberry is a member of First Church, McComb.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Philip: Consistency

Acts 8:4-13, 29-31, 35-38

By W. Wayne VanHorn

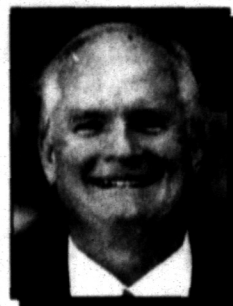
Last week we began to study the lives of people God used to accomplish his work. Our focus was on Stephen who exemplified boldness in every situation. This week, we observe the life of Philip. Like Stephen, Philip was a bold witness for Christ. Philip also was characterized by consistency. If the twenty-first century church is going to reach this generation with the Gospel, believers will need to exhibit the boldness of Stephen with the consistency of Philip.

1. New Circumstances (Acts 8:4-8)

Philip went to a city of Samaria as a result of the persecution that broke out against the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1-3). These new circum-

stances meant Philip had gone to a place most Jews considered dreadful. In Philip's day, Jews typically despised Samaritans, looking upon them as half-breeds or inferiors. Once in the Samaritan city, Philip began to proclaim Christ to them (Acts 8:5). Many Samaritans gave heed to what he said and were filled with joy as a result of his preaching and the attendant signs he performed.

The new circumstances Philip was placed in because of persecution turned out to be a field of souls ready for harvesting. Because Philip was sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, he was at the right place, at the right time, with the right message. Do we view new circumstances in our lives as opportunities to share Jesus' love today?



VanHorn

named Simon who wanted to share in Philip's success. Simon had performed magic tricks that convinced some Samaritans he had special powers. When Philip preached Christ and performed miracles, he "stole Simon's thunder." In spite of Simon's misplaced motive for believing and getting baptized, Philip consistently shared the Gospel resulting in many people coming to Christ.

We should note that both men and women expressed faith in Christ and were baptized (Acts 8:12). The message of the kingdom of God Philip proclaimed was inclusive of men and women, Jews and

2. Challenging Conditions (Acts 8:9-13)

Just as the effectiveness of Stephen's bold witness was challenged by his opponents (Acts 6-7), so Philip's consistent witness to the Samaritans attracted the attention of a man

non-Jews. Philip's consistency can inspire us to share our witness for Jesus with other people of all races and genders with a view toward seeing them come to Christ.

3. Special Situations (Acts 8:29-31, 35-38)

Just when the great revival of Samaria was going strong, an angel of the Lord directed Philip to leave this city of great action and go to a desert road that led from Jerusalem to Gaza (Acts 8:26). Philip obeyed, exercising the same consistency in following the Lord as he had exhibited in preaching the message of Christ. Unknown to Philip, the Lord had arranged an encounter with a eunuch, a royal official of Candace, queen of Ethiopia. That the encounter was divinely arranged is attested by the fact that the eunuch was reading Isaiah 53, a messianic passage, and by the fact that he sought help in understanding of whom the prophet spoke. Philip consistently focused

his message on the life of Christ. The eunuch's inquiry regarding Isaiah 53 afforded him the opportunity to witness. The eunuch heard Philip's message and like so many of the Samaritans earlier, submitted to baptism.

Christians today honor Christ by consistently sharing his love and message with others. Our devotion to Jesus should lead us to witness whether we are in a large crowd or just one-on-one. The biblical knowledge we acquire through regular church attendance coupled with our own study of Scripture and experiences with the Lord should result in a constant witness for Jesus. As a result of studying this lesson, we can dedicate our lives anew to sharing Christ with others with consistency.

VanHorn is dean of the School of Christian Studies & the Arts at Mississippi College and a member of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will

be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be

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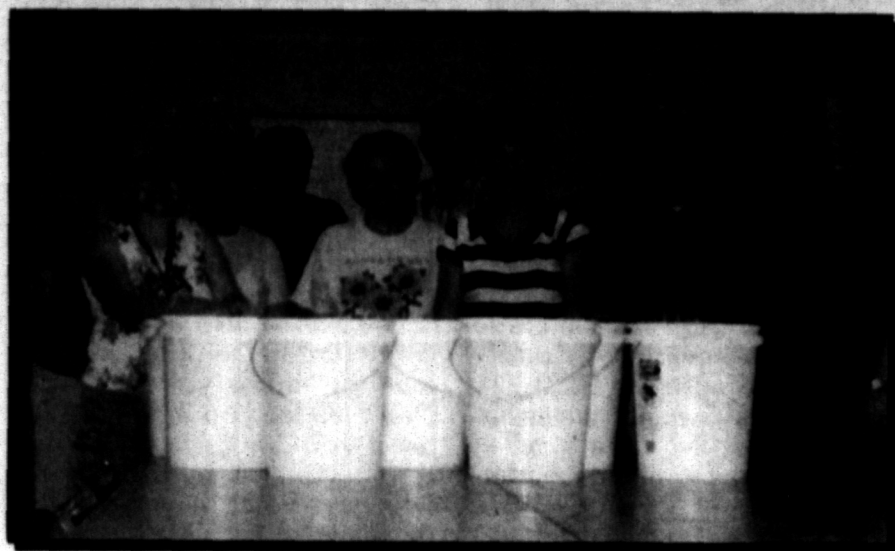
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Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



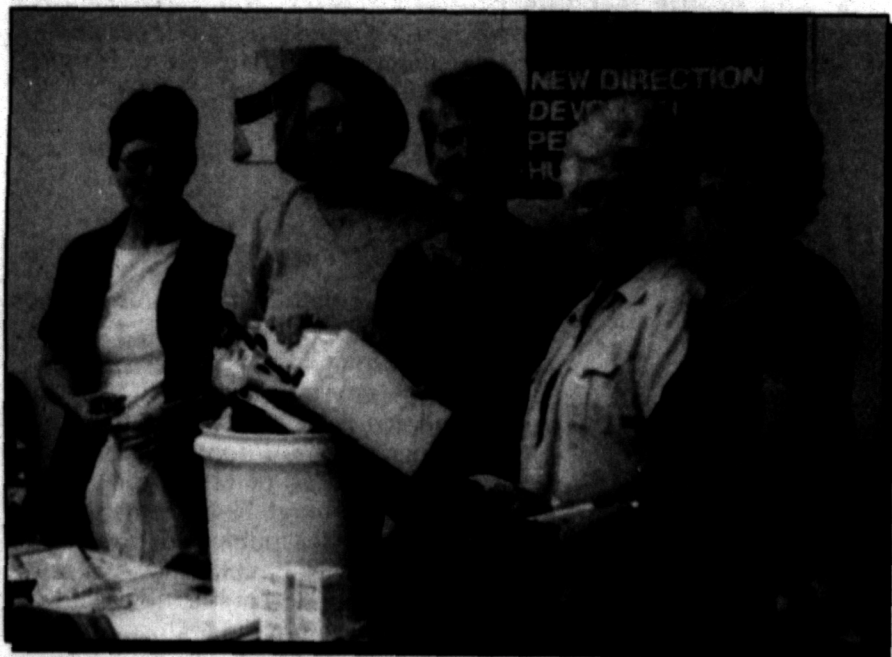
4. Cruger Church, Cruger



5. First Church, Boyle, GAs

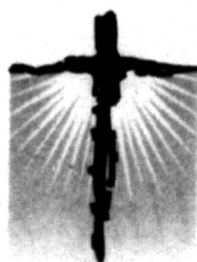


6. Turnage, First Church, Foxworth



7. Vaiden Church, Vaiden

1. **Tillatoba Church, Tillatoba**, will host the Steadman Brothers Quartet at 5 p.m. on June 29.
2. **Concord Church, Booneville**, will host a concert with song writer Elmo Mercer and his wife Marcia on June 22 at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. A reception will follow. Robert E. Walker, pastor.
3. **Montevista Church, Eupora**, will host Second Chance in concert at 5:30 p.m. on June 29.
4. **Members of Cruger Church, Cruger**, recently packed and donated ten care buckets for distribution to AIDS victims in sub-Saharan African countries through Baptist Global Response. Shown are the participants.
5. **First Church, Boyle**, honored its GAs with badges June 1 for their completion of work through GAs throughout the year. Shown are Leanna Bullock, Tristain Steadman, Paisley Burney, and Emily Daniels.
6. **First Church, Foxworth**, honored Elaine Turnage as mother of the year May 11. She is a three-year survivor of liver cancer. Shown are Turnage, her husband Reggie, and her family.
7. **Vaiden Church, Vaiden**, responded to the call from Baptist Global Response to help minister to the AIDS victims of sub-Saharan Africa by making seven in-home care kits. The kits were given in memory of Martha Howarth. Shown are Cody Dean, Sandra Hull, Judy Tompkins, Rose Ray, and Janie Webb.



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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

1. **Hope Church, Cedar Bluff**, will hold Vacation Bible School on June 23-27, 6-8:30 p.m. each night.
2. **New Hope Church, Foxworth**: Vacation Bible School Kickoff and Registration, June 21, 1-5 p.m.; Vacation Bible School, June 23-27, 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Family Night, June 29, 6:30 p.m.
3. **Robinwood Church, Saucier**, held VBS the week of June 2-6. The boys and girls competed by bringing in pennies to donate to the Baptist Children's Village.
4. **Eastwood Church, Indianola**, held Vacation Bible School June 2-6. An average of 72 children attended daily. Shown are some of the participants. Ruth Bowlin, VBS director. Billy Thomas, pastor.
5. **Highland Church, Natchez**, held Vacation Bible School on May 26-30. The theme was Christmas in May, and the children brought items each day to be placed in shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child later in the year. The VBS offering will help purchase items for the boxes and defray mailing expenses.



3. Robinwood Church, Saucier



4. Eastwood Church, Indianola



5. Highland Church, Natchez